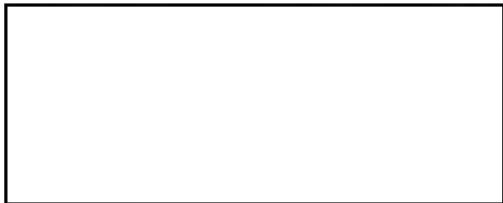


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1. UN OFFICIAL OUTLINES SITUATION IN GAZA STRIP

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A UN official has informed a member of the American delegation that press reports concerning the situation in the Gaza strip and the nature of Egyptian activity there are not accurate. According to this official, some shift of UN troops designed to place a higher proportion of them on the Egyptian-Israeli armistice line has begun, but it is not contemplated that all, or even two thirds, of the UNEF will now be placed on the line.

As of 19 March, UN officials on the scene reported that the strip was completely peaceful, with no demonstrations and no Egyptian troops in evidence. Units of the UNEF were to be seen throughout the strip. UNEF headquarters is remaining in Gaza city, although it has moved out of the building originally used by it. Reports that the force planned to move to El Auja, in the demilitarized zone farther south, are stated to be completely without foundation.

The UN relief agency has not, as some reports stated, turned over its functions to the Egyptians; on the contrary, it is resuming full responsibility for all refugee matters, and this constitutes full control as far as two thirds of the strip's population is concerned.

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